

Luke 20:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came to pass, that on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon him with the elders,

Analysis

And it came to pass, that on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon him with the elders—Luke sets the confrontation during Jesus' teaching ministry in the temple courts. The phrase "preached the gospel" (εὐαγγελιζομένου, euangelizomenou) shows Jesus actively proclaiming good news, not merely teaching ethics. The opposition coalition—chief priests (ἀρχιερεῖς, archiereis), scribes (γραμματεῖς, grammateis), and elders (πρεσβύτεροι, presbyteroi)—represents the Sanhedrin's power structure.

The verb "came upon" (ἐπέστησαν, epestēsan) suggests sudden, aggressive confrontation, not polite inquiry. This occurs after Jesus cleansed the temple (19:45-46), directly challenging their authority and revenue stream. Their question about authority (v. 2) attempts to trap Jesus: claiming divine authority invites blasphemy charges, while claiming human authority undermines His prophetic stance.

Historical Context

This confrontation occurred during Jesus' final week in Jerusalem, likely Tuesday of Passion Week. The temple Jesus taught in was Herod's temple, the center of Jewish worship and the Sanhedrin's power base. The chief priests controlled temple operations and profited from the money-changing system Jesus had just

disrupted. Scribes were legal experts in Torah, while elders represented wealthy lay aristocracy. Together they formed the Sanhedrin, which would condemn Jesus three days later.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. Why did Jesus' proclamation of the gospel in the temple courts threaten the religious establishment's authority?
2. How does the coalition of religious leaders reveal the nature of opposition to God's truth?
3. What does the timing of this confrontation (after cleansing the temple) tell us about defending corrupt religious systems?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν μιᾷ τῶν ἡμερῶν ἐκείνων,
And it came to pass in G1520 G3588 days of those
G2532 G1096 G1722 G2250 G1565

διδάσκοντος αὐτοῦ τὸν λαὸν ἐν τῷ ιερῷ καὶ
as he taught G846 G3588 the people in G3588 the temple And
G1321 G2992 G1722 G2411 G2532

εὐαγγελιζομένου ἐπέστησαν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ
preached the gospel came upon G3588 the chief priests And G3588
G2097 G2186 G749 G2532

γραμματεῖς σὺν τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις
the scribes him with G3588 the elders
G1122 G4862 G4245

